

REMARKS

Upon entry of the Amendment, Claims 10-44 will be pending in the application.

Claims 1-9 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby obviating the rejection of these claims.

Claim 10 is rewritten into independent form by incorporating the subject matter of Claim 1, now canceled. Claims 15 and 19 are amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 1. Claim 15 is also amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 9. Thus, claims 10 and 19 remain of the same scope.

New Claims 22-29 correspond to the original Claims 2-9 respectively, except that new Claims 22-29 depend on the amended Claim 10.

New Claims 30-36 correspond to the original Claims 2-8 respectively, except that new Claims 30-36 depend on the amended Claim 15.

New claims 37-44 correspond to the original Claims 2-9 respectively, except that new Claims 37-44 depend on the amended Claim 19.

No new matter is added.

Entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested along with reconsideration and review of the claims on the merits.

Formal Matters

Applicants appreciate that the Examiner has accepted the drawings filed on January 29, 2004, and that the Examiner has acknowledged Applicants' claim for foreign priority and receipt of the foreign priority documents.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. The Examiner states that Claims 10-21 are objected to as depending on a rejected claim but would be allowable if written in proper independent form.

In response, Applicants have placed Claim 10 (also Claims 15 and 19) in independent form as previously noted in order to gain allowance of pending Claims 10-21 and new Claims 22-44, which eventually depend upon independent Claims 10, 15 and 19.

Response to Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102/§103

A. Claims 1-5, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as assertedly anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Hasegawa.

B. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as assertedly anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Maemoto et al. '715.

C. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as assertedly anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Maemoto et al. '159.

Applicants respond as follows.

Claims 1-9 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore the rejection of these claims is now moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these anticipation or obviousness rejections.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

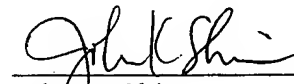
Respectfully submitted,

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